Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19)

How to Use a Self-Test

If you have COVID-19 symptoms or think you have been exposed to someone with COVID-19, you should take a COVID-19 test. Using a self-test, also called a "home" or an "at-home test," can be a quick way to get results and prevent spread to others. You can use a self-test almost anywhere as long as you follow the instructions provided with the test.

Some self-tests are available for purchase or free, and can be obtained online, at pharmacies, or at other retail stores. Visit www.covidtests.gov for information on how to get a free test. If you have questions about testing, there are a lot of people who can help you, including doctors, nurses, pharmacists, and health departments.

Here are some tips for using COVID-19 self-tests:

- Follow instructions for storing the test until you are ready to use it.
- Some tests require a flat surface and should not be used in direct sunlight, as extreme temperatures can damage the test.
- Check the package contents and the expiration date again to ensure the test has not expired and was not damaged during shipping, as these should not be used.
- Do not open test contents until you are ready to start the testing process.
- Follow the instructions carefully when collecting the sample, performing the test, and waiting for the test result to ensure test accuracy.
- Refer to the "How to Interpret a Positive Self-Test Result" or "How to Interpret a Negative Self-Test Result" videos for what to do once you have the test result.
- Once finished with the test, throw away the test contents as described in the testing instructions. Do not reuse test kit contents.

Thanks for doing your part to prevent the spread of COVID-19 in your community.

For more information, visit cdc.gov/coronavirus.